

MODERN PAINTERS

NEW YORK

Gina Beavers

Clifton Benevento // November 10–December 22, 2012



THE IN THE AGE of food porn, if you are eating a decadent meal, it has become compulsory to take a photograph of it and post it online. It is no longer enough just to savor the food; it also needs to be aestheticized.

Unlike works of art, however, such photographs are ephemeral. They appear in your Instagram stream, and are replaced just as

quickly by others. In “Palate,” an exhibition of nine paintings of meals, Beavers lengthens the shelf life of such images by appropriating them and painting them in high relief, using fat globs of acrylic paint. Doing so makes them no more palatable; rather it intensifies the gluttonous eroticism inherent in the fetishizing of food.

Neither the paintings nor the subject matter in them are in good taste. In *Applebees!*, 2012, Beavers uses sculpted layers of paint to build a plate piled with chicken wings, French fries, coleslaw, and ketchup that she copied from the Facebook page of a student from a school she teaches at in Brooklyn. In *Red Velvet Cake*, 2012, glass beads stand in for crumbs in a half-devoured slick of the sweet. From far away, the piece almost looks edible; up close, it resembles the polyurethane material used to build outdoor tracks. More realistic are the *Oysters at Grand Central*, 2012, which is a copy of an image sent to the artist by Michael Clifton, the co-owner of the gallery. Slick and viscous, the sea creatures lend themselves well to the medium. The paintings are amateurishly rendered in bright, vulgar colors, and most look as if their surfaces were made using fingers rather than brushes. Still, their visceral physicality renders photographs of the same sort bland in comparison. You don’t necessarily want to eat the paintings, but they kind of make you want to fuck something. —**Brienne Walsh**